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Sen. Patterson introduces Safe Patient Care legislation

LANSING – Sen. Bruce Patterson, R-Canton, introduced Safe Patient Care legislation today, which would require that healthcare facilities set appropriate registered nurse-patient staffing ratios and limit the practice of mandatory overtime for nurses. The bill will be known as SB 169. It has support on both sides of the aisle.

“Our state has reached a critical nursing shortage,” Patterson said. “We must take action now to help nurses. Our nurses are doing wonderful work in very stressful conditions. They truly deserve our public support. By relieving some of their stress from excessive overtime, everyone will be helped. I am working with health care leaders to enact legislation that ensures quality patient care and safety, as well as health system savings.”

Patterson received two legislative awards last year from nursing groups. The Michigan Nurses Association named him the year’s “Friend of Nursing,” and the American Council of Nurse Practitioners named him their first “Advocate of the Year.”

“Mandatory overtime for nurses is unhealthy for our health care system,” Patterson said. “Despite their personal dedication and professional commitment, overworked, exhausted nurses can make mistakes. Liability and death-costs caused by the risk of medical care mistakes have been a factor in dramatically increasing health care costs to families.”

Patterson serves as vice chairman of the Senate Health Policy Committee.

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